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Subjects: (tick box)	Project	Synopsis	Portfolio	Thesis	X	Written Assignment
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Study programme:	CCG	
Semester:	10th	
Exam Title:	Master Thesis	
Name and date of birth/ Names and dates of birth of group members:	Name(s)	Date(s) of birth
	Manuela Enache	16.11.1989
Hand in date:	14.11.2014	
Project title /Synopsis Title/Thesis Title	Branding the Danish City Is adaptive reuse an option?	
According to the study regulations, the maximum number of keystrokes of the paper is:	192000	
Number of keystrokes (one standard page = 2400 keystrokes, including spaces) (table of contents, bibliography and appendix do not count)*	121697	
Supervisor (project/synopsis/thesis):	John Hird	

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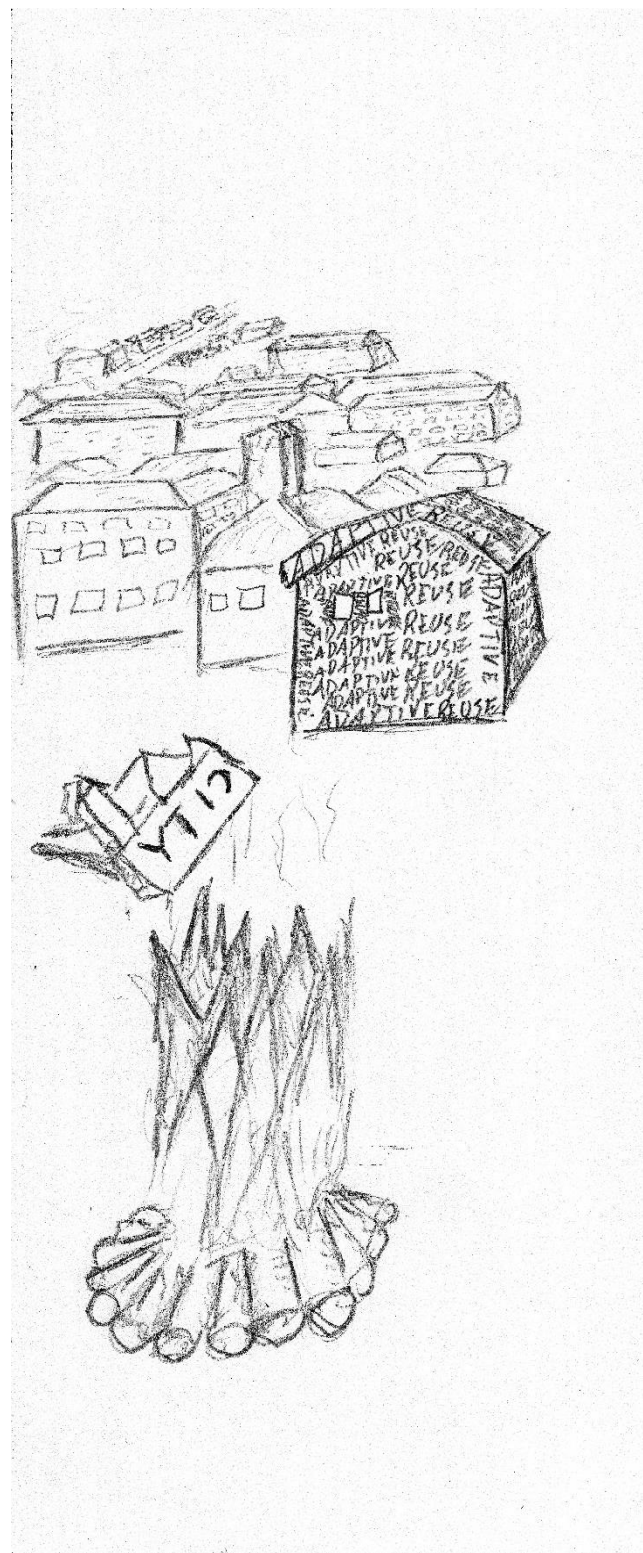
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Branding the Danish City

Is Adaptive Reuse an option?



Master Thesis

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M.A. Culture, Communication and
Globalization

November 2014



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

There is nothing more natural than change. But just like any other action, change has its own reactions and consequences. Cities have a biological clock, ticking silently together with the human timepiece. As change occurs within the social, political or technological spheres, the built structure of a city is a key part of the development. More often than not, old buildings witness a terrifying decay, becoming the victims of change, trading their old viable use for an empty space, or even demolition.

Thousands of buildings are abandoned and stripped of any purpose. Either it is a former industrial building or a fine piece of old residential architecture, these structures are nothing but commemorative plates for their previous life.

Cities are fulfilling a motor function, by spurring the economic development and gathering the cultural innovation, at the same time facilitating transformations on the social and political stages.

This thesis aims to demonstrate that the adaptive reuse of old buildings, the built environment of a Danish city can be an effective and economical sound option that needs to be taken into consideration in the present times of globalization, and used for the benefit of the local setting, through actions of city branding, with global size effects.

The Danish architecture plays a very social role on the urban stage and that makes it very special and different from other countries. Cities around the world are branding themselves by hosting big events, and Denmark has had its share. With the hosting of the 2014 Eurovision, the results left nothing more than a bitter taste, for a society which is based very much on community and social development.

What if we would take the history in our hands and paved the future of the Danish cities with it? The built structures of the Danish cities, combine the unique aesthetic features of the Danish architecture with a special cultural history, I order to create the city environment. The thesis will thus investigate the interaction within the urban dynamics of the built architecture's potential and the adaptive reuse of the old buildings, as economic catalyzers of the city image, and city brand development.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The future belongs to those who see possibilities before they become obvious.

(John Sculley)

The collapse of borders in the times of globalization has brought the world in a space where boundaries do not represent an obstacle anymore, but the lack of their presence starts to feel like a barrier. Consumers are training their tastes and attention in the bombing field of brands, advertising and marketed experiences. Brands are more than just products; they are ideas, values and experiences, and a part of the culture too, if not a culture of their own (Klein, 1999, p.30). The competition between brands has extended into both the geographic and the virtual space. Following the crash of the dot-com wars and the rise of new silent ones, on more than territorial levels, cities are on a hunt for the right economic strategies and sustainable development.

We can assert that Europe is described by its history and by old, beautiful buildings, which stand today as architectural proof of the past and culture, things that nations have developed for so many centuries. In addition, Europe is running low on spaces for new buildings unless a massive number of old buildings are torn down to make room for these new urban plans (Klingmann, 2007).

Reuse. Revive. Reconnect.

Making use of the existing buildings is an issue which Christian Schittich (2003) mentions that it concerns more than just the preservation of a city or its monuments, and it has migrated towards being an economic imperative. Ten years ago, conversions and upgrades were covering 40% of the structure in Central Europe only (Schittich, 2003, p.9). Innovation and old buildings have lost their contradiction a long time ago. The economic use of materials, of space and energy or a better utilization of the infrastructure, conversions and adaptive reuse projects are probably the main criteria for the future survival of the urban regions (Jessen, Schneider, 2003, p.12). Building in the built environment is not about cultural heritage represented by historically valuable structures, but also by *old buildings* or ordinary buildings that are part of a community and carry a certain value or tell the “story” of the place (Schittich, 2003, p.9). Looking at the built environment one can easily spot the effect of classic modern era where architects were

more interested in innovation and new, spectacular buildings. Then again, with so much built environment, we can assume that the contemporary innovation and creativity is set on working with the given fabric (Moewes, 2003, p. 23).

The last couple of decades, political and economic efforts have been focused on stimulating consumption; in this area however, architecture showed itself shy and not willing to risk adopting a label such as “commercial” (Marling, 2007, p.178). But the landscapes of consumption have never stopped changing and architecture is now playing a bigger role than foreseen. Not through the contemporary urban projects, but through bold projects of adaptive reuse, where architecture is playing the card of innovation by reusing, and not by fabricating. As Boris Brorman Jensen was mentioning, the impediment in the way of the architects’ way of looking at their field comes from the fact that architecture is primarily regarded as “an independent form of production” (Jensen, 2007, p.179).

Places overcome limitations and they behave as experience products themselves. Places, and especially cities, are more than simply “arenas” where fabrication and consumption of both goods and services are displayed (Lorentzen, 2009, p.67). Places are a product themselves and cities are looking for a way to reinvent themselves, by keeping their history and enhancing the cultural aspect. The Danish cities are put under the limelight in the present paper, trying to understand if the built material can be a valuable tool of branding, of urban regeneration, in the special context of the Danish culture and structure. Thus, the problem formulation becomes:

Can the Danish cities implement the adaptive reuse of buildings as a tool for branding the city as shopping destinations?

The analysis will focus on how *aesthetics, cultural legacy and retail potential* can be applied and used in the *city branding* of the Danish urban spaces. The main focus is put on the retail reuse of the buildings in actions to create the *shopping city* with *adaptive reuse* as the main tool of change.

Using a critical eye on the projects of adaptive reuse in Denmark, the professional opinion of Danish architects with expertise in the area of research and testing the opinion of the national audience in the new media and hermeneutics of the media, the paper will try to construct the story of the contemporary Danish city. Interpreting the opinion of the experts and providing

examples from around the country, by analyzing the effect of previously conducted adaptive reuse projects, we will try to understand the real potential of this tool in branding the Danish city. The contemporary view focuses on the old and abandoned buildings of the Danish urban setting as the grounds of success for branding the Danish city of tomorrow. The present paper votes for the “retail development to kick start urban regeneration” (Lowe, 2005, p. 450).

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Philosophical considerations

"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so." Mark Twain

The present paper aims at investigating the opportunity to use the architectural practice of adaptive reuse as an active tool of branding the Danish cities with a new role or a main attraction: *the shopping city*. Of course, in order to do so, we have to set the definitions and the theoretical frame of three levels of research: *epistemology*, *methodology* and *method*, that are more than just levels or angles of looking at a topic of analysis. They are different aspects of the focused study, and we will try to look at them individually, to understand and interpret their interconnections with the purpose of putting into the limelight the contribution brought to the surface in the research process. One can call it the quality of the quality research, as Schwandt was stating about qualitative research methods, to serve the purpose of understanding the importance of the human actions (Schwandt, 2001). Finding the right parameters will make the design, implementation and assessment of the study qualitative and reliable (Carter and Little, 2007).

The purpose of research is to bring about a contribution into the so far knowledge, through methodology and interpretation of data. However, there is also another type of knowledge called *social knowledge*. Mentioned by Schutz, he says that social knowledge takes its quality out of the body of experiences, and these define and carry out the ordinary as well as the extraordinary activities from the everyday life (Schutz, 1967). The social knowledge is important to look at in

the present case because of the implications it has with the culture of a population, the culture of a city, and the meaningful impact it has on both local and the national audience. The social knowledge is an important factor in the interpretation and shaping the opinion of the architects, taken for relevant experts in this case.

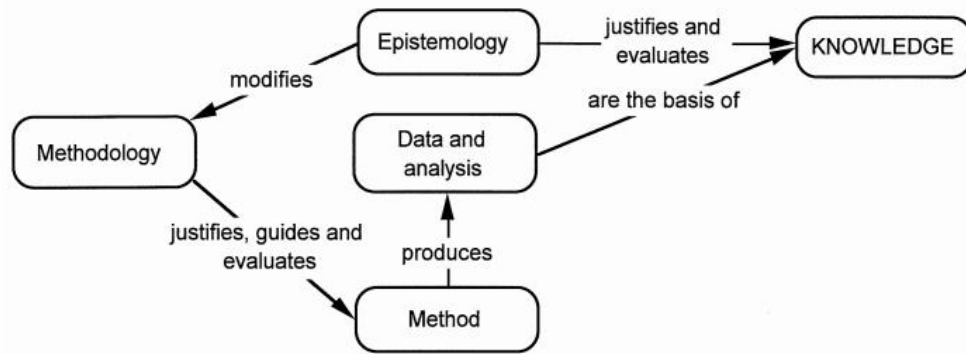


Figure 1. The Simple Relationship Between Epistemology, Methodology and Method
Carter and Little, 2007, p.1317

2.1.1. Epistemology on The Nature of Knowledge

Even if the literature (Schwandt 2001, Harding 1987) is placing the above mentioned notions of epistemology, methodology and method in a contradictory manner, they are actually necessary roles playing in the same play. As seen in *figure 1* all efforts conclude in the purpose of bringing a contribution for the knowledge, like theory building. The circle of research is basically very easy to understand and follow. In order to reach knowledge, the researchers are using methods, which are “techniques for gathering evidence” (Harding, 1987, p.2) or nothing but research practices, “tools and techniques” of research (Schwandt, 2001, p.158). Further, methodology becomes the next link in the research practice. Defined by Kaplan as a study including “description, explanation and justification of the methods” (Kaplan, 1964, p.18), methodology is providing explanations for the methods used in a research project. Also, one of the conditions of the research methodology is that it requires the use and interpretation of criteria to answer validity and reliability (Sekeran and Bougie, 2013).

Finally, what manages to wrap it all is the cognitive nature of epistemology, described as “the study of nature of knowledge and justification (Schwandt, 2001, p.71). Thought to have been

coined by James Frederick Ferrier in the 19th century, the study of knowledge is in fact the study of concept formation (Pegues, 2008, p.318), because, after all, our knowledge, except for the proper nouns, is conceptual. Concept formation is a rational process, and epistemology grows at its roots three axiomatic concepts: existence, identity and consciousness (Ibid.). Knowledge becomes a source of debate itself and an object of interpretation, where some philosophers are studying the elements that create knowledge, the sources that lay at the basis of knowledge, as well as the limitations imposed (Moser, 2002). Knowledge is more than often found to be discussed and studied, or to be more specific their scientific side is the topic of interest for the philosophers of science (Kitcher, 2002).

Knowledge and the theories of knowledge are constructed through social research practices; the formal theories, grounded theories of knowledge alone can of course add and enrich the research epistemologies, but it is the social inquiries that finally succeed to shape and construct theories of knowledge (Schwandt, 2000). The scientific knowledge can only examine the facts previously made knowable, and that is why we can affirm that it restricts from itself the possibility to gain knowledge from the objects that are yet to be discovered, building an exclusive area of objects of analysis stating what is “valid” to be known (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2011).

The epistemological reflection does not seek in any way to become universal, because its nature is the perpetual investigation of the subjects of research; it is not “normative” (Schmidt, 2001, p.136) and that is why it continuously renews itself repeatedly. However, epistemology leaves room for questions to be asked and answered. In this sense, epistemology is raising issues about the way reality can be known, about the connection knower and known, about the features and the guidelines of the process of knowing as well as its conclusion, the findings. Another important question rose by epistemology is making known the process of research and encouraged to be repeated or revised by others in order to assess the quality and validity of the findings (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2011).

As mentioned before, in epistemology techniques and the system of knowledge used by the researcher, actually the researcher’s beliefs in terms of structure or complexity, and of course sources of the knowledge itself (Klenke, 2008). It is important and part of the process actually, that the researcher brings about a new set of epistemological assumptions, which interpreted together with the data contribute to the validation of the result. It was also Karin Klenke to continue the topic of epistemology identifying two types of relationship between the researcher

and the researched. When discussing the *traditional* research, most of the times a quantitative research, the researcher takes the position of an outsider, separated, while the *traditional* view is mostly connected to the qualitative research where the researcher is taking an active role, interacting with the researched (Klenke, 2008, p.17).

The present thesis is adopting the second stance proposed by Klenke, where the research is turning to qualitative methods and is taking a closer and more personal look at the topic chosen, making, if not the emotional branding, then the emotional analysis of the data, in a personal and delicate matter, searching for a conclusion.

It has become a common practice to introduce ontology together with epistemology, as it is placed at the foundations of the qualitative research. The ontological side of a research framework is using questions about the nature of reality (Blackburn, 1993), both the *physical* one as well as the *social* one, therefore it is asking the very first paradigmatic question. As a qualitative researcher it is in the nature of my approach to accept several and dynamic realities, which are dependent of a context, within an ontology that does not include the possibility of an external reality (Klenke, 2008, p.15). If we were to define the external reality, mentioned before, we could use the terms of John Searle (1995) who argues that the external reality is one that exists separate and autonomous from our personal filters and interpretation. If we come to think about it though, the personal interpretations is rooted into a circumstantial tissue, so rich that it cannot be readily widespread to other situations. I have adopted the position of a qualitative researcher in the present paper, because it is not close to my set of beliefs that there is a unitary reality out there, isolated from any of our perceptions. In addition, if there is no objective reality, then, in the terms of a relativistic ontology, there are multiple realities constructed from the interpretation of the individuals in the social contexts (Klenke, 2008).

The final step is to transform the epistemological and ontological conventions, the questions on “How do we know what we know?” and “What is the nature of our reality?” in order to identify the particular tools and techniques to achieve knowledge, therefore, to identify the right methodology. The ontological and the epistemological norms are decoded and used as specific methodological strategies (Klenke, 2008). The methodology addresses the question “How should we study the world?” and it looks at the types of sampling, the design, the data collected and the analysis, as well as the effects or the results derived from the methodological choices. The aim of methodology is in fact to “describe and analyse ... methods, throwing light on their limitations

and resources (...) to help us understand the process itself” (Kaplan, 1964, p.23). Also in Kaplan’s terms, it is not the methods themselves to look at in methodology, but the study of methods (Ibid. p.18). I chose to mention the research process and linger now around methodology because this reflects the beliefs on the topic of the knowledge and values essential for the paradigm the study is conducted with. Methodology calls for a concern and a pledge to construct a certain type of knowledge (Ibid.). The personal choice of study design for the present research will help me later justify the methods chosen. With a certain focus on the opinion of experts (architects) and people’s attitude on the adaptive reuse of old buildings in the Danish cities and its use as a branding tool, I would like to set the stream of investigation on a path of qualitative research. Starting the exploration with a set of hypotheses and beliefs, I will let myself be shaped by the understanding of the expressed opinion and the personal reality that each individual taking part in the study is experiencing in connection to the topic chosen. In the present investigation, the qualitative research will look to interpret the meaning of old buildings and their potential reuse in the image of the Danish city, as part of a contextual reality the Danish urban communities are sharing. Like Denzin and Lincoln would say “studying things in their natural setting, attempting to make use of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (2005, p.3). Even if quantitative researches have the chance to bring about important discoveries through prediction and generalization of their findings, the qualitative cases of research are facing a higher level of topic exploration where findings reveal illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations (Hoepfl, 1997). The importance of the qualitative research can be found as well in its main characteristics, like the high level of attention paid to the inductive process, the understanding as well as significance and the descriptive nature of the creation (Merriam, 2009, p.13). On top of everything, while the quantitative research depends so much on the construction of the investigation tool, the qualitative research benefits from the fact that “the researcher is the instrument” (Patton, 2001, p.14), and what better filter and moderator of the process, than the researcher itself?

2.1.2. Adhering to The Constructivist Paradigm

As mentioned before, there is a vital connection between epistemology and both ontology and methodology. Due to the questions each of them pose, ontology and epistemology translate

themselves into accurate methodological strategies (Klenke, 2008). At the crossroads of these joint connections between ontology, epistemology and methodology, there are the research paradigms, the focused thoughts of the individuals in connections to the world, which are not demonstrated yet (Lincoln, Guba, 1985).

Taken from the author to which the term is attributed to, Thomas Kuhn, the paradigm should be a general view on experiencing and thinking about the world, together with principles about morals, values and aesthetics. Adopting a paradigm is a must every time one is studying the social phenomena (Kuhn, 1970). In the context of qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) defined the paradigm as “a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimates or first principles. It deals with a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the “world” (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.107). In the same stream of ideas, Creswell attaches to the meaning of “paradigm” the idea that it is “a basic set of assumptions that guide the inquiries” of the researchers (Creswell, 1998, p.74).

The closest paradigm of interest to follow the stream of the present research is *constructivism*. Supposedly “a major educational philosophy and pedagogy” (Elkind, 2004, p.306), constructivism could be the paradigm that has reached a consensus for the chaos brought by the schism between qualitative and quantitative. Constructivism is one of the two important learning theories, together with Behaviorism. The main difference stands in the fact that while behaviorism is looking at knowledge as the result of a finding process, when constructivism approaches knowledge as a natural consequence of a constructive process, a difference between acquiring knowledge and constructing it (Bichelmeyer and Hsu, 1999, p.4). The constructivist paradigm can be approached in its many forms (cognitive, critical, radical or social), but the core of all of these they will be sharing the same epistemology and the same ontology, in the idea that that researchers “construct their own knowledge” (Sener, 1997). However, social constructivism is the most popular type, also known as social learning theory, because the model adopted is based on the title of “truth or reality given only to the constructions on which the majority of people from a group agree” (Murphy, 1997, p.5).

At the basis of the constructionist argument stays the fact that reality as we understand it is a social construct resulted from and between the individuals who experience it (Gergen, 1999). The world and reality becomes in this way a subjective expression resulted and shaped by any cultural, political, historical or social norms that function at a given time in a given context.

Therefore, reality becomes a different concept based on every individual's personal experience and understanding of the world (Berger and Luckman, 1966). Reality is very subjective in this case. We should put in the balance the same view from the point of view of *empiricism*, as the foundation of positivism. As expected, from this objective corner, the reality becomes vertical, universal and measurable. A positivist view would not be suitable for the present research, as it contains so many factors to be considered, from a very subjective angle. Dealing with matters of aesthetics, taste, travelling even, or local community, a positivist approach would only force us to see the same reality through the same eyes, reducing every individual to the status of a passive receptacle.

I believe that the constructivist approach is the one that covers best the present paper, as I will be trying to find meaning in the social experiences of the Danish city, through the eyes of the experts or through my own analysis of the data. It is an investigation where, as learners and researchers, we find meaning in our subjective experiences, and we interpret in a stream of ideas and methods that will eventually conclude and constitute knowledge (Poerksen, 2004a). It is not necessary to find the same constructions carried by two people, as that would make us fall into the confusion of conducting ontological presuppositions, about the world and reality, and this comes in conflict with the constructivist acceptance of research norms (Ibid.). Found at the absolute opposite corner of constructivism, there is objectivism, which sets the focus on the object to be known, and not on how to build the knowledge (Jonassen, 1991).

From the ontological point of view, the constructivist paradigm is relativistic because, as mentioned before, realities are accepted and understood in their multiple and abstract form, based on the social filters and experiences, and very much dependent on the person or the group holding the construction. These constructions must be noted that they are alterable, just like their associated realities are (Lincoln, Gupta, 1994, p.110). From the epistemological point of view, the paradigm involved in the paper, is transactional and subjectivist. All so-called "findings" in a constructivist investigation are actually created on the same pace as the investigation goes, because they erupt as a consequence of the interactive linkage between the researcher and the object to be researched. It is probably a thin line that can be rose when discussing the validity of the data collected, because of the level of subjectivity present in the constructivist strategies (Ibid.). Methodologically, and this is the side that I personally like the most about constructivism, is the description of the paradigm in *hermeneutical and dialectical* terms. The

nature of the research becomes very personal, and even if we are talking about the risk of over-personalizing the data, the individual constructions can stand a chance only if it is refined between and among the investigator and respondents (Ibid.). The danger of the reliability is covered by the fact that the investigation is guarded by the ethic construction of the investigator. The interpretation of the data is done through hermeneutical techniques and put face to face with a dialectical interchange (Schwandt, 1994).

The constructivist philosophy may sound idealistic, but there is no part of the social world that can be described without looking at how people are using their object of knowledge to construct the social practice. Even closer to the point, the *constructivist-qualitative inquiry* is known for the importance of using the holistic behavior of the phenomena (Stake, 1995). Because I have chosen to pin point the Danish city and to attach it to the context of adaptive reuse (the archeological reality) and the city branding (the identity reality), the aspects that need the most attention and interest are the situational and structural aspects of the context (Klenke, 2008). It is my aim to understand the practice of adaptive reuse, and to reevaluate it through the eyes of the Danish architects as a tool for more than just the architectural purpose. A quantitative method could be of use in this matter, however, it would not reach a specialized and focused aim, and would not help construct the social knowledge, nor would it help the theory building in the issue proposed.

2.2. The Methods of Research

The present study has an exploratory purpose and therefore a qualitative research design has been chosen. Instead of interviewing the national or international audience in a quantitative research or a mixed methods research, I chose to investigate the assumption that experts (architects in this case), must hold a relevant knowledge base. Starting with the experts' opinion, I have the chance to look at the experience these professionals have gathered thus far and translate their conclusions, in terms of procedures, limitations, effects and possibilities, into new possibilities for the branding and revival of the Danish cities. The data collected from the expert interviews is afterwards analyzed for the key terms with the content analysis (Krippendorf, 2004). Choosing architects as experts, and architecture students as an target group for the

netnography method, the final analysis has more chances to develop a general perspective which can identify the first emerging opportunities in the analysis of the media content.

2.2.1. A matter of Hermeneutics and Knowledge

Introducing the interpretational approach can be difficult, but in this case, I wanted to go back to a theorist labeled by some “positivist” and by others “objectivist”, Karl Popper, as he has revived an attitude to knowledge, called evolutionary epistemology. This type of epistemology deals with problem solving, just as we are trying to apply the PBL (Problem Based Learning) model here. Popper adds in the process the stage of the elimination of errors and he based his knowledge building growth through trial and error, conjecture and refutation. This chain is supposed to involve for individuals the production of new ideas (Chalmers, 1999).

Usually, Popper’s theory is represented in the shape “P1 -> TS -> EE-> P2”. Starting with a problem, followed by the elimination of errors through testing and discussion. At the end and thanks to the process, new problems are born, “P2” A somewhat similar stream can be discussed in another practice in the qualitative research, the hermeneutic circle, or spiral.

As described by Heidegger, the hermeneutic circle it a very helpful tool to provide a valuable framework to understand the importance of studies like the one proposed in the present paper. By position the research eye in the humanistic side, the present paper will look at the data gathered in the shape of a spiral or a circle. In the hermeneutic tradition, the hermeneutic tradition the hermeneutic circle is a tool to help the research test the interpretation of text (Warnke, 2011). Taking over Heidegger’s thoughts on the circle, Gadamer write in his study “Truth and Method” that the hermeneutic circle would actually be the condition for understanding, it allows the reinterpretation of the data/evidence in order to fit the presumptions we need to submit (Ibid.). The hermeneutic circle wants to bring into a research the fact that the more we involve the topic chosen into a sphere of reflection and exercise, the deeper we will get to knowledge. It is important to remember that the circle we are talking about is not really a circle. It is indeed a series of interpretations, but just like Schleiermacher said “nothing that needs interpretation can be understood at once”. To wrap it up, the use of the hermeneutic circle will be kept in mind here as a support to get closer to the topic and to bring to the surface more issues that could help the present topic capture more applicability.

2.2.2. In-Depth Expert Interviews

The semi-structured or the in-depth interviews is one of the most frequently used qualitative research data-collection methods (Murray, 1998). The focus of this study is to investigate the possibility of branding the Danish cities with the help of a creative architectural tool, adaptive reuse of old buildings. A secondary point of interest is looking at the retail reuse of these buildings and their coherent effect of transforming the city's image into a "shopping city", or better said, a shopping destination as a form of culture manifestation and enhancement. One of the advantages of using a semi-structured interview is perhaps the greater degree of flexibility in comparison with the structured interview (Klenke, 2008, p. 127). The semi-structured interviews are very closely built to the unstructured interview, in the sense that the questions are guided by the topic chosen while the way of asking the questions and interacting with the interviewee follows the unstructured interviews manner (Ibid.). In this sense, the researcher has the freedom to adapt to the course taken by the respondent, and if something relevant occurs, further questions of inquiry are not only allowed, but also encouraged.

According to Ian Parker (2005) interviewing is a methodology, which includes a certain level of analysis from the process of collecting the data, and the focus during semi-structured interviewing is bound to keep the focus on a high level of attention for both questions and answers, from and towards both researcher and interviewee. His argumentation in the favor of the semi-structured interview as a qualitative method in a research because of some "traces of power", as he calls them, that manage to keep the things in place and "it reveals an interviewee's a co-researcher's creative ability to refuse and resist what the researcher wants to happen" (Parker, 2005, p. 41).

Both the unstructured and the semi-structured interviews lay at the very essence of the "in-depth qualitative interviewing (Klenke, 2008). Created with the objective to explore the perspective of the informants from their own experiences, expressed in their own words (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984, p.77), the in-depth interviews differentiate itself by being more than just an interrogative stance and stepping into a conversational exchange. With the architects being the ones in charge of the creative part of the adaptive reuse projects, the in-depth interviews are able to understand if a coherent and well-connected adaptive reuse program can serve transform the image of the city. Using the trained eyes of the Danish architects, also being the ones who know the real

situation of the Danish built environment with the reuse potential, the research is hoping to pin point the validity of this new hypothesis. Bryman (2012) underlines the same open nature of the semi-structured interviews, which allows the researcher to discover new ideas during the interviewed dialogue.

Participants are free to describe meaningful ideas using their own words, therefore translating the reality through the eyes of the respondent (Kvale, Brinkman, 2008), and that makes the in-depth interviewing support the social constructivist paradigm where it is supported the fact that people construct their reality based on their personal experiences and interactions, realities curated by their personal filter. By choosing the *expert interviews* for data collection, I opted for the similarity with the unstructured interviews as a method, also known as *key informant technique* (Nadel, 1939, p.317) in the way that the respondents are strategically chosen for the research, as they are significant for the topic but they are not interviewed on a long-term period. The study is not interested at this stage in providing a complete ethnographic description of a group and its socio-cultural patterns (Ibid.), but in the understanding the patterns and chances of a tool adaptation into economic, marketing and cultural terms, which will involve more stakeholders than the social actors only.

Choosing an exclusive interview palette of experts has the grounds in their observations, which are potentially valuable because of their comprehensive knowledge process and, as architects, have an advantaged professional point of view (Trezzini, Phillips, 2014, p.1884).

Of course, semi-structured interviews come along with certain disadvantages as well (Bryman, 2012) like the risks of going off track caught in the conversational flow or influencing the answers to some extent. It is a method that can put to test the validation of the information provided, however, I hope that the level of the respondents, expert interviewees will make the conclusions closer to validating the trustworthiness of this research.

2.2.3. Sampling

Above anything, the main strength of a qualitative research is its potential of in-depth exploration of the topic chosen (Carlsen and Glenton, 2011). The selection of the participants in the study needs to have a rational path and to fulfill the “purposive” (Collingridge and Gantt, 2008) nature of the qualitative methods chosen. The choice of participants is based on their

potential to provide rich, dense and focused details, which can help construct the answer to the problem formulated, and facilitate the path for the researcher in order to submit valuable findings on the phenomenon accounted (Curtis et al., 2000). In the interview-based qualitative studies, the source of information are the researcher and the respondent. In order to obtain in-depth valuable information, both the data gathering process and the interpretation need to present verbal fluency, clarity and analytical capabilities of explanation (Sobal, 2001). A well-thought topic and research can achieve highly relevant information and analysis even when using a small number of respondents. The sample size was not central in the present topic, however, limitations were met even to fulfill the minimum number of respondents. The informational outcome is nonetheless, enough to reach conclusions and interpretations. In the data gathering process, during the interview, saturation needs to be a point of awareness, noticing when “all questions have been thoroughly explored” (Trotter, 2012, p.399).

For the present research, I have opted for convenience sampling, which refers to the choice of those participants who could be reached, combined with a purposive sampling (Marshall, 1996), choosing to change and adapt the questions from the interview guide, according to the relevance of the interviewee’s experience.

2.2.4. Media Content Analysis

Even if the topic proposed has not been investigated previously, I chose to look at the Danish media coverage regardless of the explicit presence of the topic of adaptive reuse as a branding tool for the Danish cities. Instead, the efforts are made to find different media articles that look at adaptive reuse and interpret within the present research, the potential of that project in relation to the topic through media content analysis.

The proposed theme is aiming to develop an introductory analysis of the adaptive reuse as a tool for branding the Danish cities and therefore, the analysis is based on the principles of content analysis, a research procedure that can help achieve replicable and reliable conclusions from text to the context (Krippendorff, 2004). In the context of mass communication research, content analysis has been developed and used as a valuable fast-growing tool for the past decades (Neuendorf, 2002, p.1). Describing the content analysis as “the primary message-centered methodology” (Neuendorf, 2002, p.9), content analysis is therefore interested in analyzing the

“verbal behavior as a form of human behavior” (Lasswell et.al., 1952). *Media content analysis* becomes in this way a particular sub-set of content analysis (Macnamara, 2006).

Introduced by Harold Lasswell (1972) for the first time as a technique to study propaganda (Macnamara, 2006), media content analysis is today a method of deconstruction of media pieces for an investigation advocated to be either quantitative (Neuendorf, 2002; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996) or qualitative. Nonetheless, the present thesis is interested to look at both paths actually, because one does not rule the other. Even if Shoemaker and Reese (1996) are more on the quantitative side, note that “reducing large amounts of text to quantitative data does not provide a complete picture of meaning and contextual codes, since texts may contain many other forms of emphasis besides sheer repetition” (Shoemaker, Reese, 1996, p.32). The quantitative observations are also useful, but they do not serve any purpose if they are not supported by the text interpretation, in the given context. The problem of the media content analysis and the quantitative-qualitative dichotomy is put under the limelight by Newbold et. al. (2002) underlines “the extent to which the quantitative indicators are interpreted as intensity of meaning, social impact and the like. (...) it would be too simplistic to base decisions in this regard on mere figures obtained from a statistical content analysis.” (Newbold et.al., 2002, p.80). In the upcoming analysis, I will use a qualitative eye on the data, because the quantitative content analysis “has not been able to capture the context within which a media text becomes meaningful” (Ibid.), and a steady focus on the objective and qualitative data. I strongly believe that there is no delimitations for the two of them, as this tool can achieve reliability through the quantitative technique and important conclusions through the qualitative interpretation of the media texts. According to Newbold et. al. (2002), the sampling for the media content analysis will follow a three-step procedure: a) the selection of the media forms (i.e. newspapers, film etc.) and genre (news, business etc.); b) the selection of issues or time period and c) the actual sampling of the relevant content from the media chosen (Newbold et.al., 2002, pp.80-81).

There is of course, the risk of the content analysis to overtake the levels of subjectivity, as the media content analysis is deeply dependent on the researcher’s interpretation.

2.2.5. Netnography

In the same stream of thoughts, a small part of this research will have a trial to gather some analysis from another type of media, the new media, through *netnography*. For the netnography exercise I chose to launch a topic in Facebook group, acting like a forum, with people from a city (Holstebro), with a somehow knowledge of a city's old buildings and history, placing them in a more specialized group, where I can be sure that they can get involved into a topic and share their view. One of the many groups online dedicate to the old cities, "Det gamle Holstebro", has proven a good choice. Stepping outside the experts area, I looked at other dynamics in the social media, always in relation to the media findings, the social media page of a newspaper and other groups.

Kozinets (2002) was the one to talk about netnography and its study of the culture and communities that result from social media or Internet-based channels of communication, where topics and channels to be observed and interpreted need to be carefully selected. A qualitative tool in itself, netnography is based "primarily on the observation of the textual discourse" (Kozinets, 2002, p. 62), using content analysis to code and interpret the data.

Even if I chose to introduce it together with the conventional mass media communication, there are some differences when discussing the online media communication (Stempel II and Stewart, 2000). For instance, some information might not be public (take for example groups on Facebook, which require a membership before interacting and gaining access to the posts), private or semi-private communication, public communication if there are no access restrictions. The advantage of using, even just briefly, a method like netnography is that it can add more validity in the balance of the qualitative research. Whilst the mass media can provide subjective information from source (due to paid articles, ownership etc.), "from behind their screen identities, respondents are more apt to talk freely about issues that could create inhibitions in a traditional face-to-face group, particularly when discussing sensitive topics" (Solomon, 1996). It does not take a vast amount of information to be collected from a method like netnography, because valuable conclusions can be of use even with a smaller number data messages, the only condition is that they would contain "enough descriptive richness and are interpreted with considerable analytic depth and insight" (Kozinets, 2002, p.64). It is not hard anymore to be able to introduce the data collected from netnography in a generalized conclusion because of the rapid

rise of the Internet access level. Of course, amongst the advantages of this tool, the natural answers and the openness of the respondents/interactionists opens, on its turn, a window for the researcher and his/her study. However, the risk of people not interacting is as well one of the disadvantages that should be taken into account. Users may find the topic boring, they might lack the time to involve in discussion or the researcher might have not formulated the status update in a manner that would attract them to participate.

2.2.6. Trustworthiness and validity in the Qualitative Research

The right way to start this section is by asking the question: “How can we know whether an action research study is “good? (Feldman, 2007). There are many characteristics of a study that can be used to assess its quality, and *validity* is one of them. However, validity has been defined more in relation to the quantitative studies, whether “the set of scores we have produced accurately reflects the presence/magnitude of the target property in the objects we have measured” (Hammersley, 1987, p.77). Because of this, quality within the qualitative studies has been replaced with other constructs such as *credibility*, *persuasiveness*, *verisimilitude* (Heikkinen et al., 2007) or in terms and characteristics that might be easier to relate to; Lincoln and Guba (1985) use terms like *dependability* or *transferability* for *validity* and to portray *authenticity*, they mention *fairness*, *simulation* and *empowerment of action*. In this way, validity rejects the extreme understandings of naïve positivism and radical constructivism (Feldman, 2007). Keeping a balanced opinion, the acknowledgement becomes that the social construction of our perceptions of reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) and our personal construction of the social reality (Searle, 1995) are in a level of correspondence to another reality, outside from us.

Heikkinen *et al.* note that there is more than just one narrative that can be told from the same data and experiences. The researcher’s task is to demonstrate why the narrative presented in the study undergone more truthful than any other possible narrative (Feldman, 2007). At the same time, to be able to construct a truthful narrative, which correctly represents the action research and its outcomes, the researcher needs to make sure that the result needs to be a “complex moral and cognitive achievement” (Winter, 2002). According to Winter, the application of the dialectic principle is to rise the level of validity through the combination of more perspectives. The present research follows this directive through the various data resources and perspective

analysis, and at the same time, it will seek in the analysis to represent the same data from different angles, as a form of critique to other views (Feldman, 2003).

Starting from the constructivist status to which the paper adheres, the issue of validity can be a topic of discussion in itself, because of the pluralistic, interpretative and contextualized conclusions over the nature of the topic's reality. Any researcher is concerned about *validity* and *reliability* whenever designing a study, interpreting the data gathered and especially when judging the quality level of the study (Patton, 2001). However, qualitative studies seek to interpret, to describe and to understand, rather than to measure something literally (Feldman, 2007, p.22).

Stenbacka (2001) mentions that “the concept of reliability is even misleading in the qualitative research. If a qualitative study is discussed with reliability as a criterion, the consequence is rather that the study is no good” (Stenbacka, 2001, p. 552). Therefore, the honest affirmation would be that reliability in the qualitative research is actually irrelevant, unless it is expressed through the right arguments. In this context, there is a need for some sort of check or measure of a qualitative research, so that the conclusions can obtain that quality label. In the qualitative research, triangulation methods are used to improve the validity of and reliability of the investigation, by combining methods; this means using different kinds of methods or data, amongst others a combination between qualitative and quantitative approaches as well (Patton, 2001, p.247). By choosing multiple methods, in this case *expert interviews*, *media content analysis* and *netnography*, the research is raising its chances to qualify as a more valid, consistent and varied construction, as per aligning itself to the constructivist paradigm, a construction of realities (Johnson, 1997).

Amongst the advantages of triangulation there is the increase confidence for the research data, the use and the revealing of original techniques to understand a phenomenon and to reveal in the end exclusive results, results that enhance theories and provide stronger appreciation of a problem (Jick, 1979).

2.3. Limitations

During the gathering of data, a series of limitations have affected the speed and the process of analysis for the present paper. It has been hard to get in touch with more experts, architects from

Denmark, the majority answering that they are not interested or not answering at all. There have been also cases where experts agreed to participate then changed their mind and abandoned the study. A broader geographical area could have provided information from a more general view over the Danish cities.

The language barrier is another problem as well. Some of the interviews have been completing over e-mail after a series of explanatory conversations about the topic studied. The downside of this point is that it did not allow the same fluent interaction that a face-to-face interview has, which facilitates the emergence of new topics or details that could have been disregarded. Moreover, a couple of respondents asked for the interview to be in Danish because it would allow them to better express their thoughts. It was, of course, the natural choice, as it helped the results attain more quality information, however, it did slow down the process. The language barrier strikes on the researcher's side as well, where all the media content analysis and netnography is based on data recovered from the Danish media channels.

Another point to mention on netnography, is that while trying to be part of a group "Det Gamle Holstebro", where I could post a topic and monitor the activity, my profile did not get accepted even if I live in Holstebro and I have asked for permission to join on an average of five times. The solution was to ask someone who would be willing to do so in my place, and monitor the activity as a non-member of the group. In the end, the result are closer to truthfulness in this way, because my membership would not have gained the other's members trust, and perhaps they would not have interacted.

III. THEORY

3.1. Terminology

Before going deeper into the topic chosen, some terms need clarification and definition, as they are the subject examined in the present paper.

As far as the conversation about old buildings goes, the historic preservation advocates can relate to the term of *adaptive reuse*. Meant to reemploy a building and push to the surface its hidden values as a real property, the adaptive reuse of a building is one of the most important practices to preserve existing buildings, by changing its purpose, after the structure has reached its level of

maturity within the life cycle (Cohen and Robbins, 2010). Another characteristic of the adaptive reuse is that the restored buildings are usually gaining an economically viable use, not only a mere preservation of the structure. Like Cohen and Robbins (2010) mention in the *Green Guide*, the *adaptive reuse* of buildings puts together a great case for cities, where their transformed historic buildings are points of interest for an urban settlement in the course of a major redevelopment effort (Cohen and Robbins, 2010). Part of a larger set of actions, adaptive reuse may come along with restoration or preservation.

The *brandscape* was described in its early days by John F. Jr. Sherry (1985, 1998) as a “material and symbolic environment that consumers build with marketplace products, images and messages, that they invest with local meaning, and whose totemic significance largely shapes the adaptation consumers make to the modern world” (Sherry, 1998, p.112). This was seen as a way to produce consumption, actively fueled by consumers themselves. In Riewoldt (2002), brandscapes are described as “3D designed brand settings” (Riewoldt, 2002, p. 7)

Brandhubs are phenomena that first appeared in the North America and the Far East, recently introducing themselves in Europe as an “emerging hybrid urban typology in corporate conglomerate” and defined as a “comprehensive urban mixed-use environments developed by brand-name corporations in partnership with host city authorities. Utilized as branding instruments and designed by signature architects, they aim to mediate corporate identities to a broad audience in an experiential ‘public’ space” (Höger, 2004, p. 125).

Another term in the series of the cities between design and consumerism, there is *designscapes*, as a “network of activities and artefacts that produce place-identity within cities” (Julier, 2005, p.869). These three terms mentioned until now, will help us understand where the action chosen in this paper is positioned.

Another series of terms of great interest for the present research is the difference between *old buildings*, *historic buildings* and *cultural heritage*. The cultural heritage has been defined at the World Heritage Convention in its first article to contain: “monuments - architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science; groups of buildings: groups of separate or

connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science” (unesco.org). What jumps in one’s attention, especially in the buildings part, which is part of the topic we are dealing with here, is the characteristic *outstanding universal value*, placing the cultural heritage on a very high pedestal, with little to no access to change. The *historic buildings* are described and identified through the *historic character* (Yeomans, 1994). To mention a couple of the characters Yeoman (1994) mentions, he says that they can vary very much from building to building, from the materials of construction and its overall proportions to the surroundings of the building. Some buildings can have their significance residing in the association with a person or an event, and the same way it goes to its architectural value; if it belongs to a certain style or region, if it contains certain examples of craftsmanship or if they are the piece of work of a famed architect (Ibid.). The notion of *old buildings* may have not been specifically identified, however it is a part of both historic buildings and cultural heritage. It can point out any building, which has had a working function at one time in the past. I chose to use this term more often than the other two, and the experts were asked as well about their input.

From a general perspective, the branding of a city is based on key attributes like image, uniqueness and authenticity, and could be defined to be concerned with “how culture and history, economic growth and social development, infrastructure and architecture, landscape and environment, can be combined into a marketable identity that is accepted by everyone” (Zhang, 2009, p.248).

3.2. The local part in the global view: The premises of city branding

As part of our reality, inhabitants or tourists, entrepreneurs or consumers, students or employees, we are directly ‘responsible’ or connected to the course of development a place takes. Just like Baudelaire observed, urban life is always described by the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent (Baudelaire, 1986, p.86); however, the urban space and its dynamics are also flooded with rapidity, flexibility, innovation and uncertainty. That is why during its development in different stages of modernization, the urban space has adopted new architectural structures, new designs, and with it, new forms of sociability (Knox, 2011, p.25).

Today, the entrepreneurialism of urban control, and not only, has made renewal, repackaging and most of all, rebranding, a common priority among large industrial cities (Knox, 2011, p.150). Yet, perhaps not only large cities and metropolitan areas are dealing with this. Both big and small communities are confronting with the rise of a competition due to a rapid pace in which the information technology and economy are taking their big loop in globalization; just like any other product or service, cities want to attract rare resources surrounded by a forever growing variety of possibilities (Klingmann, 2007, p.271).

3.2.1. Branding the City

In 2004, Celia Lury was describing branding as “a platform for the patterning of activity, as a way to organize activities in time and space” (Lury, 2004, p. 1). Nevertheless, as a specific market modality, Orvar Löfgren was looking at branding from a different direction, as a set of tools and a technology in its own, placing city branding in the heart of attempts to create the city as an *experienscape* (Löfgren, 2007, p. 75). The priority for places is now to adopt a marketing view and implement a strategic vision, and to promote its competitive benefits together with a distinctive image, usually a new image, in order to appeal to the potential investors and audiences (Klingmann, 2007, p.271). While more and more communities are transforming themselves into traders of products and services, places are adopting a corporative mindset: they promote goods and facilities and they create new markets, in the fast growing ‘battle’ for the customer base (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993, p. 346).

The process of branding differs in the case of a city, a region or a country, and Caldwell and Freire (2004) mention that people perceive them differently. While countries act according to the representational part of the identity they share, regions and cities occupy a more functional position, due to their size; after all, behind the successful marketing of a place there is the understanding of the perception people share about each other (Herstein, 2012, p.148). It is thought that branding a city requires a more elaborated process than countries or regions (Hankinson, 2001). The cities are branded through a series of characteristics and things they are best at, adopting positive branding with the aim of adjusting the public opinion while introducing the idea of a city between the lines (Ooi, 2010, p.4). The process of branding for a city is anything but static. At the very beginning of the process, a series of core characteristics are chosen, attributes that will shape and support the identity of the city (Ooi, 2010).

A series of theorists have identified a number of categories, considered by them the most important parts of that brand. According to Simon Anholt (2006) he talks in his City Brand Hexagon about “the presence” (the way the target audience is familiarized with the city), “the place” (place physics), “the potential” (economic and educational offer), “the pulse” (vitality and urban lifestyle), “the people” (the perception over the inhabitants) and “the prerequisites” (the quality of a place). Worth mentioning are Grabow’s et al. (1995, in Zenker, 2011) “pictures”, divided in *business*, *cultural*, *historic* and *spatial*. While the first is concerned with the economic sector, the last three categories or pictures are preoccupied with the festivals and events, historical events, the architecture and the mentality of the inhabitants. It is very interesting to keep in mind these “pictures”, as the latter is spot-on my topic of research.

Entitled “meta-factors” by Zenker et al. (2009), his four categories express halfway the satisfaction of a resident with a specific place. He looks at *nature and recreation*, *urbanity and diversity* (and here there are cultural activities, there is shopping etc.), *job chances* (economy and work environment) and *cost efficiency* (living costs).

In order to find the categories that fit best to the present paper, we will be looking at *the pulse and prerequisites* (Anholt, 2006), *spatial* mainly from Grabow et al. (1995) and the *urbanity and diversity* in Zencker’s factors. These are the categories we choose to look at, and see if they have the potential to create the image of a city.

3.2.2. The economic boom of the city potential

History teaches us that the modern city, between 1880 and 1945, showed a desire to rise the bourgeois commercial culture, and that could be witnessed in the new structures like the shopping arcades, department stores, the big intro of the hospitality sector – such as hotels, restaurants, cafes and higher levels of entertainment, amusement parks or theaters (Benjamin, 1999, p.123). By using new technologies and materials (like the plate glass, the cast iron or the steel construction), the modern city communicated the fact that a change was needed in the dynamics and the production of the urban space; a sense of fluidity and a kaleidoscopic motion were the descriptive words for those days (The history and conservation of shopping arcades). Since the contemporary times seem to be so diverse, the challenge for scholars is to identify the need of the present day’s urban space.

Therefore, coming back to the now, and before going any further, the words of Philip Kotler, Donald H. Haider and Irvin Rein, are needed in order to pin the starting point in analyzing the urban space and its current stage of development. In their book, *Marketing Places*, they say that ‘places are ranked, rated, and evaluated today on every conceivable dimension: where to start or locate a business or plan a retirement, where to raise a family or look for a spouse, where to plan a vacation, hold a convention or have a meal. From quality of life considerations to charm, culture, and ambience, the quest for livable, investive and visitable places is a perpetual search for the new and vibrant, and effort to stay clear of the sullen and depressed’ (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993, p.2).

As argued by Paul L. Knox in *Cities and Design*, places are changing and shifting their position according to the postindustrial economy: they focus on business services, leisure facilities, and tourist attraction points. He argues that these are intertwined with the chronicles of *city branding* (Knox, 2011, p.150). One can claim that places are making efforts to design and plan their settings in order to suit new economic infrastructures, heading for consumption rather than production. Political scientists John Logan and Harvey Molotch, argue that the local leaders, identified in stakeholders like estate agents, bankers, landlords, building companies up to retailers and media, are led by the wish to shelter and assure the *premises for growth* (Logan and Molotch, 1987, p.134). If you’re thinking what they are looking to achieve, from Logan and Molotch’s ideas we can understand that together with the efforts for city branding, the appearance of new economic infrastructure efforts is invariably connected with the birth of an *ideology of growth and consumption*. These principles lead us to the conclusion that there is a specific cycle inside the dynamics of a place and the factors gravitating around the identity and the development of a place. *This cycle is able to support the insight of the present research connecting the reuse of the built environment and the historic heritage with the notion of city branding, involving the local government decision-making and pursuing public-private partnerships as part of the branding strategies.*

Following the above mentioned thoughts on growth, an actual ideology of growth and consumption can be forwarded, *the neoliberal agenda* (Swyngedouw et al., 2002, p.545) where growth machine coalitions depend on political leaders and local governments (property taxes

fund infrastructure and services). Therefore, the implied support of the professionals (architects, planners, designers etc.) whose jobs depend on this growth, can be easily inserted in the cycle.

*The cycle (based on Knox, Logan and Molotch).

1. The premises of growth – led by local elites
2. The neoliberal agenda – developed by growth machine coalitions
3. The support – area professionals

The most significant example of this kind of relationship between the urban scheme and economic effectiveness is probably the branding of New York City which after the fiscal crisis of 1970s was described as a city of civil unrest and sky-high crime. The local elites (New York magazine, Association for Better New York and the mayor) set the ‘Big Apple’ branding demo. Trying to portray the city as a cool destination for living, working and shopping, the city’s mayor at that time (John V. Lindsay) set a public-private coalition, sprucing up the city (Greenberg, 2008, pp. 125-134). The branding continued with the famed ‘I ♥ New York’ campaign, not only an image renovation, but also the redirection of the city towards a business and tourist-friendly surroundings. After further rebranding, New York City is marketed under the slogan ‘The World’s Second Home’ (Greenberg, 2008, p.134).

3.3. Labels for the urban design

Urban design may seem as the superficial yet, it plays one of the most important parts in a place identity. Trying to compare a human being with a city, appearance, thus the urban design, is in fact the very first contact of a place with its audiences. Governments are starting to understand the importance of urban design, and so has the design and architecture expertise, seeing more and more projects where old buildings are part of the urban regeneration plans (English Heritage Toolkit). Universities are expanding their urban design curricula while a renaissance of the topic has started slowly over the past decades (as private business initiatives though, like Apple stores, Restoration Hardware etc.).

London Mayor’s office has founded an advisory group, entitled ‘Design for London’, which works directly with the mayor and closely with the Greater London Authority and other offices alike, for the analysis of the city’s public dominion. This is a relevant example for the present

topic, as part of the group's assignments is also the birth of historic heritage program, within the improvement of infrastructure and the upgrade of the public spaces (English Heritage Toolkit, 2013).

In 2005, Guy Julier entitled the different ensembles of new buildings, heritage conservation projects, landscaping and other cultural services with a specially crafted program of events, *designscapes* (Julier, 2005, p. 870). The concept of *designscape* is highly important for the present paper. The term looks at projects and programs, which are enhancing the city's identity giving a new dimension to the original specialization of the place. For example, the Millennial regeneration in Portsmouth, or Salford Quays in Manchester, with the help of public private partnerships, the reuse of the built setting emerged in the regeneration of an industrial-urban area, through the development of residential spaces, offices, hotels and retail spaces (Knox, 2011).

Cases can go back to Margaret Thatcher's deliberate attempt to redevelop the Docklands area of London, going beyond marketing the area to the global investors, but also making it part of the idea of a United Kingdom as a revived, postindustrial economy (Knox, 2011, pp.154-156). In this case, the city branding was the master catalyzer for the nation branding of the UK. The program, like many others, did not escape from critics, mostly related to the social polarization rise or gentrification (Butler, 2007).

However, no matter how great the idea to revive an industrial part of a city is, the programs can happen to become very similar. Graeme Evans used the term *hard-branding* to put in connection flagship buildings like museums or art complexes, with events, like the Olympics, and the effects that can result from these into the regeneration and place identification (Evans, 2003, p.417). Quality is never part of hard-branding, and, as Julier mentions, this type of practice, would do nothing but create a chain-series of strategies and serial reproduction of architecture, disturbing any competitive advantage and homogenizing the identities of the cities (Julier, 2005).

What is important to underline here is the acknowledgement that design has turned into a key element within the economic competitiveness among the cities (Knox, 2011, p.157).

But it is not only design to take into consideration among the competitive elements of an effective city (re)branding. It is Anna Klingmann to talk about another phenomenon,

brandscape. She writes that retailers and brands, especially resonant brands, act as extremely influential facilitators in order to increase the value of a place, a person or an event (Klingmann, 2007, p.64). The rebranding is therefore, done through challenging traditional structures and their meaning, followed by the implementation of new narratives (Klingmann, 2007).

It is important for this paper to look at both the terms introduced here and defined in the terminology part. The purpose and the mechanism of city branding we are looking at would be a combination of the two. Julier's *designscape* (2005) argues within the "culture-led regeneration" a more complex role of design in the process, a role that should go "beyond buildings, or leaflets to a loosely coherent, hegemonic network of signifiers" (Julier, 2005). So, between this idea of urban *designscapes* and the idea of *brandscales*, adds another term, the *brandhubs* (described in the terminology). Using *adaptive reuse* as a tool for city branding takes the aesthetic part formulated by Julier, the consumer oriented nature in Klingmann's vision and the private-public cooperation in urban regeneration potential announced by Höger.

3.3.1. Nostalgia – regeneration on the bricks of globalization

The global economy has always influenced the way designers continued to develop their work in the world. Globalization reshaped the way of work for most of those in design professions and Andrew Jones points out this dependent relationship between globalization and work, thus naming the very thesis of 'the global work' (Jones, 2008, pp. 14-17). Defined by Giddens as 'a complex set of transformations leading to greater social interconnectedness' (Giddens,1999), Jones' concept of 'global work' looks at work as it can be seen in the Western countries, a form of social charged activity, a major dependent for cultural behavior and even degrees of happiness (Jones, 2008, p. 24). However, his research also looks at the epistemological approach where work witnesses the rise of professionals from a class, called by Leslie Sklair 'transnational capitalist class' (Sklair, 2005) as a result of the continuous transformations that occur within the contemporary phenomena of globalization.

The importance of which work practices are shifting is relevant to our topic of adaptive reuse, as design and architecture are co-dependent under the many influences consumerism (directed by marketing, retail or media specialists), technical practices, political actions or corporate players

(transnational corporations and their local subsidiaries) take place in the contemporary context of globalization. While results tend to reiterate themselves worldwide, the challenge upon areas, which should differentiate as a purpose, rises; areas like retail, culture and architecture, set under the same umbrella by the adaptive reuse, needs to escape from a cage of uniformities (Sklair, 2005).

Globalization is profoundly shifting the spatial nature of what work is and on what practices is constituted through, but it is also changing the way people experience work nowadays and the impacts it has on others (Jones, 2008, p. 24). The way Jones (2008) is looking at the workplace and the effects globalization has on the working environment can be easily attached to the new theories of city branding. The need to differentiate is bigger than ever. The way to do it might be by looking at the remaining pieces of history and their adaptive, yet creative reuse. 'Style', says the Canadian creative director Bruce Mau 'is not superficial. It is a philosophical project of the deepest order' (Lees-Maffei, 2012, p.135). Therefore, in times like these, creative spatial concepts, yet projects that are able to satisfy the people's thirst for nostalgia, are potential prototypes of distinction and successful redefinition of the social space within the context of transformation shaped in the economic globalization (Klingmann, 2007, p.44).

Introducing 'nostalgia' as a factor to look at in changes within the urban space and aesthetics, we start by mentioning Alastair Bonnett who identifies nostalgia within actions of urban space intervention. His thoughts are most valuable in regard to his observation upon the establishment of engaged subjectivity (Bonnett, 2006, pp. 29-35). His thoughts make us realize that the scope for illustrative archival practices, such as the case of historic buildings in our case, is to embed or to enhance a high level of urban sensibility (Roberts, 2011, pp.313-315). Nostalgia plays a key role within the reuse of old buildings and the city branding, because of the dialogue it starts between the initial role played by the old buildings and their place in the contemporary socio-spatial landscape.

Many architects have tried to recreate or to reinvent the Guggenheim, and there is no one to blame them, because, in the end, Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao) was not only an art museum. The actual goal of the city's leaders was to revive the economy of Bilbao, and to make the city a premier destination; the town called in 1970's by Barry Commoner 'a museum of

environmental horrors' was to be transformed later into a cultural Mecca, governed by the Guggenheim Museum effect (Alvarez Sainz, 2012, p. 101). A wonderful marketing tool.

Conversions cause a shift in the traditional relationship between object and its use. The challenge for planners, designers and architects for every case of building conversion, for this shift of purpose is finding the right implementation in this reversal of the traditional definition of conversion, by choosing the right program of change for the building and its purpose. Daily, insignificant buildings are added to the list of heritage-protected and historic buildings, which enter the waiting list of "change". Integration of new uses in old buildings brought Jessen and Schneider (2003) to determine three patterns:

a. Feature Space – existing buildings as exhibition spaces

This specific pattern looks at buildings, which keep conversion as a route for the generally cultural projects: a castle becomes a castle museum, churches into community centers etc. This means that this type of conversions look at buildings as heritage-protected, where both the value of the structure and the outcome, the new public function, are unquestionable. The approach in these cases has a key role in the cultural identity of a town, they are "prestige projects" as Jessen and Schneider call them. Their role is played within the local culture, enhancing the profile and positioning the place branding on the touristic map (economic importance). Nonetheless, the public use of historic buildings has become more and more limited due to the high costs imposed by the state or municipal agencies.

b. Niches for pioneers – appropriated buildings

At the other end of the line, we can find the buildings that do not hold any historical importance, most of the time industrial or manufacturing buildings. Large volume buildings with low rent costs are opportunities that other existing buildings cannot offer. The spaces offer a higher degree of freedom in interpreting the available space and they can always be the host of unusual experiences and cultural manifestations within. The industrial buildings however, do not come with a great architectural degree as the space is mainly focused on its big dimensions and the various possibilities of the visual artist or entrepreneur have.

c. Conversion as exploitation – marketing existing buildings

As a new window for a niche, conversion has grown to be marketable and old buildings seen as a vital capital beyond the estimated values. The historic value becomes a genuine aura of

authenticity in the tension between new and old, and it actually transforms into a stand in for innovation, openness and adaptability. Through the adaptive reuse of the built fabric, architects refer to history and interpret it independently (Jessen, Schneider, 2003, p. 16). There is however, a desire to preserve the old buildings in these projects. It seems to be very important to keep, aesthetically speaking, the visual reference of the historic image of the original concept (Schittich, 2003, p.9).

However, in order to give back the community a feeling of the old identity and history, can converted buildings keep their *authenticity*?

3.4. The Shopping City and The Rise Of Retail

3.4.1. The commercially driven entertainment centers

It is probably important to draw a line and understand if we are studying the revival of the city into a place of entertainment or an actual preservation and enhancement of the cultural capital through adaptive reuse and retail investments. Briefly mentioned together with the designscapes and brandscapes, a distinction between the *marketable experiences of the “shopping city” emerged from adaptive reuse of historic buildings* and the *commercially driven entertainment centers (UEDs)* is needed.

While we are looking at the way cities can brand themselves through the retail adaptive reuse of the historic buildings (the *shopping city*), it is vital to mention the Urban Entertainment Districts or UEDs as well. The latter ones combine four systems of activity for the consumer: entertainment, retail, dining and culture, all gathered under a themed umbrella (Klingmann, 2007, p.89). Called “fantasy cities” by John Hannigan (1998), he describes the UEDs as places characterized by “theme-o-centrism”, highly dependent on *brands* and their success and fame. Just like the city that never sleeps, Hannigan says that UEDs are functioning non-stop and are “modular” in their structure as they mix and match components in different stances (Hannigan, 1998, p.3). Oriented towards entertainment, the UED usually does not miss things like a multiplex cinema, book megastores or themed restaurants. Finally, Hannigan mentions that the “Fantasy City” is very egoistic, very much looking at one sole neighborhood, trying to separate

itself visibly from the rest, a *postmodern* city (Hannigan, 1998, p.3) which is living because of the thrilling satisfaction of the virtual reality. Posing in this stance, Christine Boyer (1993) similarly calls it “the city of illusion”, because of its various delimitations.

The “shopping city” proposed in the present paper can be confused with and UED because it is also based on public-private joint collaborations, with the purpose of making the place a *destination*. However, as mentioned in the theoretical delimitations of the terms, the difference resides in the fact that the brandhub (UED) is a “comprehensive urban mixed-use environment developed by brand-name corporations in partnership with host city authorities” (Höger, 2004, p. 125). Whereas, the city branded through adaptive reuse and retail experiences, is defined by one purpose (‘shopping city’) and it is not focused in one specific area, culturally deteriorated and revived by new architecture or reuse.

Perhaps looking at the contemporary city, we can see its characteristics shifting towards more focused places, places that differentiate themselves from the crowd, individualized places and privatized society (Miles, 2010, p. 14). Whatever cities are undergoing in their plans of development, writers like John Rennie Short are seeing cities as embodiment of globalization (Short, 2013, p. 23); in this sense, the relationship between the individual and society, ergo between the individual and the urban environment, is suffering changes and could be fundamentally altered (Miles, 2010, p. 20). Talking about cities taking the shape of shopping means looking at the urban space as a product of the market system. However, does that really mean that a “shopping city” is nothing but a result of a degraded society “obsessed with commodities and in thrall to transnational corporations” (Aldridge, 2005, p.31)?

We might claim that cities have “character-building” effects, and it is a factor to be taken into account, as places are a wide frame of our life context (Miles, 2000). What we are actually trying to understand is the difference between the cultural purposes of a city and its retail actions and interactions. Nonetheless, economy and culture are actually walking on the same path, being an intrinsic part of urban economic development (Scott, 2000, p. 47).

How to transform culture into a valuable tool in the renewal of the cities’ image? History is the capsule that incorporates culture and within that, cities are bearing the witnesses of history, architectural pieces of time: historical buildings and cultural heritage. Keeping in mind that we

are trying to investigate the branding of cities through their cultural “offer”, the retail adaptive reuse of buildings is put to test within the identity of the Danish city.

Authenticity is one of the factors to look at when cities undergo projects (Prentice, 2001, p. 18). Culture can take many forms, and inside a city, from museums to art galleries, a city must not miss consistency and coherence, just like any other marketing action. In order to set the many faces and manifestations of culture within a city, Montgomery nominates the idea of “cultural quarters”, as cultural districts that are described by the assembly of creative and design industries (Montgomery, 2007, pp. 16-20).

3.4.2. The Experience Strategy: Economy and Retail

The rise of retail observed over the past decades did not happen without any impact on the urban design. More and more new spaces have emerged in the urban structure and a retail component was encapsulated at their core. The rise of retail is very well described and fashionably exposed in *The Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping* (2001). With the rise of retail, the contemporary postmodern society has adopted shopping as an archetypal cultural phenomenon (Hemmersham, 2009, p.60).

Fascinating about the retail is the fact that it is on a constant flow of change; retail is always reinventing its spaces and its approach towards the consumer satisfaction (Rees, 2006, p.143). The public space is quite hard to define nowadays, at least in the same terms that architects and urban planners used to understand, the meeting space between people and art (Benett and Butler, 2000), a place with its own identity, a place for social interaction and distinctiveness through aesthetic expression and experiences (Rees, 2006, p.144).

If you are wondering what are the enduring proofs of authenticity left in the public space, then you are on the verge of stepping on the long and hollow debate between fake and genuine. The polemic on the term is between Sharon Zukin (2010) and her reaction on Jane Jacobs’ (1965) approach on authenticity; between the truthfulness got from the real course of history of the working class, as Zukin writes and Jacobs’ idea that urban genuineness is set into the “eyes on the street”, the retail ground floors and the crowded community sidewalks.

Retail design, thus, the retail environments need to keep up with the latest trends, as they are walking at the same pace with the merchandise supported. It is not a rule, but it is the common and noticeable view upon retail design. However, the retail world is running low on new and modern spaces because buildings are keeping the same rhythm as time, and not trends. Just like a two-way road, the once new-structures are the today's old buildings. That means that the built environment relies on its retail arm to produce enough revenue for their existence. Retailing has become an activity *par excellence* delivering the needed "feel-good factor" for an audience of consumers who are on the look for leisure and projects of pleasure in their interaction with the city environment (Rees, 2006, p.145). The challenge that rises for the architects, urban planners and communication or marketing specialists is to be able to provide a year-round climate of 'eternal spring', pampering a city's audiences in order to enjoy, invest and return to it (Cross, 2006, p.150).

But what lays at the core of competitiveness in the global market is experience, and the experience economy is one particular way to compete there, a "competitive advantage of products" (Pine II and Glimore, 1999). Cities can have different elements of fascination, like history, culture or architecture however, the key to success is in the way the city engages the audience with a well-executed strategy to transform a dull moment into a memorable event; the experience economy is very much connected to places, as they have the bound possibility to be capitalize (Lorentzen, 2009, p.67). While experiences are individual, each person subjectively interprets the interaction and filters it through his/her own preferences, the environment that produces these experiences needs to be coherent, thus, an adaptive reuse project should be more successful when planned on a larger scale, as a unity.

3.4.3. The Next Big Thing

The belief in the power of shopping and the retail influence has been firmly supported from 1960, when Victor Gruen in his book *Shopping Towns USA* created a dream that knows no limits. Of course, he talks about shopping malls, but what we need to remember from his thoughts are the utopian belief that retail and the *shopping city* would create an adaptive and multifunctional urban universe and that the community life would flourish (Gruen, 1960). However naive his ideas were, we are learning now from his mistakes. Gruen wanted to create the perfect urban society, a utopia that failed in that way. He wanted to mix two contraries in the

same bowl: urbanity and complete order. He took real life components and set them in a shopping building, away from the city, away from what the urban community feels and acts.

The proposed theme of adaptive reuse as a tool for city branding wants to bring back this idea that retail, or the shopping city, is more than just a place of consumerism. The shopping mall has changed over time, through 1970 and 1980, together with the appearance of New Urbanism (the architectural trend to return to the old times of small and friendly towns, with a focus on the outer design and not on functionality – Knox, 2011, p.34), still popular today. What the concept of shopping mall does to this revitalization of the city, and in this case, the Danish city, is the return to history, to the forgotten and resuscitate, bring back the liveliness of the city through shopping. Nordkraft, in Aalborg did it, and it is the best example to choose. By putting together culture, leisure, hospitality and retail, an industrial building, yet meaningful to the identity of the city, became the murmuring meeting point for both the community and the tourist audience. Nordkraft is part of Aalborg's identity and branded image.

Why the city as a shopping destination? The actual role of consumption lies in its key role as a dominion of pleasure (Knox, 2011, p.13). The British architecture, for example, was based on the creation of pleasure between 1925 and 1940; while the urban environments were just emerging, the city residents were entering and adapting a 'hyper stimulated' setting. Leisure started building into the people's lives increasing in importance and shaping itself more and more into the future (Miles, 2010, pp.25-26). If the morality of the vision upon leisure, as seen in those times, has now gained a different perspective, the ideology of the 'entertaining city' is being taken out of moral boundaries by the consumption age.

Literature has been discussing the issue of the "shopping city", like Miller's books on covering already discussed theoretical marketing issues (Miller et al., 1998), and thus, criticized by Arnould (2000), for lacking to bring anything new. Most of Miller's (1998) theory of shopping can find roots in the work of Sherry (1990, 1998), but both "Shopping, Place, and Identity" (1998) and "A Theory of Shopping" (1998) analyze the consumer behavior and the shopping actions in the British shopping malls. Thoughts on *shopping* and *consumers* can be traced back to Christine Frederick (1929), who investigated the relationship between women and their consumer purchasing power, a piece of the feminist literature. Furthermore, once with Stephen Brown's (1990) article on retailing strategy, also known as the "wheel of retailing", marketing

and even more consumer behavior received more data to set the basis for the literature on *shopping experience*.

There is no doubt that the adaptive reuse projects can always be made for the local community, but a coherent city strategy would be able to comprise both community-led locations and shopping areas. Just like many other cases, retail should be seen like an economic driver in the conversion of brownfield areas, especially in the shape of private-public partnerships with the leading roles of the cities, retailers and architects or property developers (Hemmersham, 2009, p.61).

IV. ANALYSIS

The following chapter will look at the data gathered through the research process and will interpret the findings from the research methods chosen: *expert interviews*, *media content analysis* and *netnography*.

Looking at the expert interviews, I chose to discuss the topic with professionals from the field of architecture, who should have a significant contribution through their knowledge in design and the Danish culture. As main players in the private-public collaborations, architects were approached from both Zealand (two respondents) and Jutland (four respondents). The experience of the respondents varies from 20 years old to 60 years old, with stages of experience from a couple of months of employment after graduation and 30 years of experience in architecture. Having had adaptive reuse projects was not a mandatory characteristic; however, the majority of the experts had at least one project or has studied, or participated in a pitch to land an adaptive reuse project. The interview guide, and the various adaptations of it, depending on the level of expertise (i.e. Eske Møller, architect at RealDania, was asked some focused questions about the organization's projects and undergoing research about the adaptive reuse of abandoned churches in Denmark). A table with the details of the respondents can be seen below:

Name	Company Occupation	City	Education	Age	Experience (years)
Eske Møller	RealDania Architect MAA	Copenhagen	Aarhus Arkitektskole	57	25
Stine Nyegaard	Arkitekt MAA	Copenhagen	Royal Academy of Fine Arts, KBH	26	2
Peter Dahl Henriksen	Søren Andersen Arkitekt MAA	Holstebro	Aarhus Arkitektskole	50	20
Erik Flodgaard Madsen	Holstebro Arkitektkontor Arkitekt MAA	Holstebro	Aarhus Arkitektskole	60	30
Vibeke Holmbo	Holstebro Kommune Arkitekt MAA	Holstebro	Aarhus Arkitektskole	55	25
Lasse Gade	Achitect and Engineer Genistreger	Holstebro	Ingeniørhøjskolen i Århus	36	11

The audio files of the face-to-face interviews (four) can be found in the CD, which has been attached to the paper and the transcriptions, as well as the answers received over e-mail, are in the Appendix 2, from 2.1. to 2.6. The last interview is missing transcription, however, any quotation can be confirmed by the audio file.

The majority of expert architects in Denmark have the chance to specialize themselves, to “educate” (appendix 2.2.) themselves in the architecture schools of Aarhus and Copenhagen, also pillars of urban creativity and innovation, and the runners up on the list of the biggest cities in Denmark. The same difference is visible in their opinions as well. Architects are aware of the difference between Zealand and Jutland, where the dynamics of the urban space reaches high in the capital area, whereas in Jutland, the space looks and behaves rather different.

4.1. Towards a Description of the Danish City

Within the expert interview and the content analysis I sought to find in the beginning the opinion of the professionals upon the Danish city. What does the Danish urban landscape communicate

about itself, and more important, what do architects as “manufacturers” of aesthetic urbanism, see when looking closer at the Danish urban space. That is why the beginning of the interview has marked three questions on the characteristics of the Danish city. As beneficiaries of the design results, “we have absorbed design so deeply into ourselves that we no longer recognize the myriad ways in which it prompts (...) and excites us. It’s completely natural.” (Poynor 2007, p.136 in Knox, 2011, p.7). However, we are part of a bigger picture, and try to find the components.

In the vision of the professionals I have been talking with, the overall vision of the Danish city is described by the *very strong built heritage (appendix 2.1.)*, *nice and clean (appendix 2.3.)*, *very organic (appendix 2.3.)* and by *the first impression you have of a nice place to be, where there are small streets, and squares, and so on (appendix 2.3.)*. One of the first impressions are directed towards the aesthetic view of the structure (*it’s the combination of fairly new architecture in the setting of the medieval city structure that defines and describe Holstebro – appendix 2.5.*). The second view upon the city bridges the way to Denmark’s historical characteristics, and a specific feature is to be noted, some of the Danish city’s special position in which they used to be a *købstad*, translated as a *market town* these days. The Danish Center for City History defines the term as a *by, som kongemagten havde givet særlige privilegier. De vigtigste var retten til at drive handel, søfart og finere håndværk i byen. Bønderne havde ikke sådanne rettigheder* (a town to which the Crown had given special privileges. The most important was the right to carry on trade, shipping, and crafts in the city. The farmers had no such rights - dendigitalebyport.byhistorie.dk/koebstaeder/). The Danish city becomes because of this *a town with an old center from medieval times where they have these historic qualities (appendix 2.1.)*, *a center, the historic center, a lot of built heritage (appendix 2.3.)*, and a place characterized from its very own history by trading. This is a feature that affects the physical structure of the city and the community in different ways (*the trading culture in the Danish history and the way it brings community around it – appendix 2.3.*).

The history of a city is mentioned in several literatures like Klingmann (2007) or Zhang (2009), where the process of branding and shaping identity is strongly rooted in the past, in the proof and results of history.

Naturally, the idea of history asks for the investigation of the meaning of “old” and “old buildings” in the vision of the Danish experts. Together with this, a series of numbers and data will better clarify the status of the old buildings in Denmark, their number and spread. The topic of old buildings is usually going towards projects of adaptive reuse, as the present paper is trying to, as well as urban regeneration (Lowe, 2005). In Denmark, this concept was brought into conversation through the Planning Act of 2003 where old and abandoned built industrial regions within the urban borders started to be seen and appreciated as a resource for re-development (Sørensen and Aunsborg, 2006).

Number fact: 2.700 ha, corresponding to 6-8% of the total industrial and commercial built environment, reached the maturity level for redevelopment in 2001 (Sørensen and Aunsborg, 2006).

The old buildings can be *buildings from the 30ies, which are old, but they are not necessarily beautiful buildings (appendix 2.3.)*, at the same time they can be *a combination between the physics, the houses, and the environment that is growing around it, the life that is lived (appendix 2.1.)*. Whether they are both old buildings or cultural heritage, the difference resides in its use, present and past, and in the meanings adopted through history; *a building that isn't in use for the purpose it was built, a building that is old (more than 100 years I suppose) or something like that. (...) Regarding the cultural heritage, a building can be both old and cultural heritage but it can also be only one of the two (appendix 2.4)*. Whether there is a value on the “old building” characteristic, *there are old buildings that are not anything, some of the old buildings are not heritage, some of the old buildings we can throw away (appendix 2.3)*. The subject of cultural heritage is very often put under the attention of the public authorities, as defined by UNESCO at the World Heritage Convention, and mentioned in the theoretical chapters of this paper.

Wrapping up a “model” of the *Danish City*, a particular comment jumps to attention, placing the Danish city in a description of dynamics and again, as a player in the industrial and trading arena: *a lot of Danish cities have grown where there have been traffic hubs, around waterways, roads or one or more places of industry. In general though the “model” is that there is a core of business and city life, in and around the town center, and depending on the size, one, no or several malls around the town (appendix 2.4.)*. We can conclude her that, from past times trading

activities have been a determining part of the Danish cities, ranking them on the country map and in the market options of the communities and artisans. As far as the difference between the old buildings and the cultural heritage, a one of the interviewee's statement makes the right differentiation, according to the other respondent's views: *Cultural Heritage doesn't necessary have to be old! And old buildings doesn't necessarily have to be cultural heritage. I believe that historic buildings and cultural heritage are a variation of the same. If the building has a historic value for Denmark, I believe it is also cultural heritage. There are a lot of the architecture from the 60'ies for example that now is part of or common history and thereby is cultural heritage, which we must preserve. It is my conviction that all old or historic buildings no matter what, should be preserved with dignity (appendix 2.2.).*



Maastricht cathedral, bookstore adaptive reuse – Photos: Merckx+Girod | Absalon Kirke – Photo: Jacob Ehraban

4.2. The Real Potential of Building Conversion

At the center of the present research, I am starting the analysis regarding the possibility and the practice of *adaptive reuse* of the old and abandoned built environment from the Danish cities, in a process of *retail conversion*. Taking out of Anholt's hexagon (2006) *the space*, which means the actual structure and potential of the city, in the Danish city *in general*, you can find many old buildings in many towns that you can use for many purposes that is different from what they were built for. And in several towns there is a lot of resources in empty buildings (appendix 2.4.).

4.2.1. Nostalgia

Rees (2006) was discussing the meaning of the public space and its influence on community as well as its own identity, a space of social interaction where art is shaking hands with people (Benett and Butler, 2000). In Denmark, *The Danish city is a very democratic city. The*

*municipality and government has a lot of saying and control with the properties, planning and future, which has given a very homogeneous city. The Danish welfare system is very present in the planning and discussion of the Danish cities. **The citizens' well-being has traditionally been of high priority** (appendix 2.2.).* The protection of the people and the projection of the adaptive reuse actions to help and support the community is the main purpose of the cities. The answers of the interviews are conclusive in the matter of **nostalgia**, of civic collaboration within *the whole environment, how it interacts, how people interact, and what it does to people* (appendix 2.1.). Mentioned by Bennett (2006) in the case of interventions in the urban space, the findings of this same “urban sensibility” (Roberts, 2011) in the present study show that the grounds of adaptive reuse need to be carefully analyzed and implemented. Nostalgia, in the proposal of adaptive reuse technique, is a powerful sign that shows the need for creativity and distinction, in the redefined social space of the Danish city, a city where *less is more* (audio file 6) and refuses to give to the economic globalization (Klingmann, 2007). Even the activity that some organizations are undergoing, in the present case Real Dania, it is strictly related to the same well-being mentioned before, where the funding can be allocated to *local people that really want to do something... (the funds) are directed at them so they can make small projects and apply for money to realize these* (appendix 2.1.).

4.2.2. Old buildings new meaning

Adaptive reuse is no news in the Danish architectural space. *Harbor areas with factories and shipyards has the last decade been used for other uses than previously. That same is now happening with many churches. In general, the old industrial buildings from the 1900 century has great potential of reuse* (appendix 2.3). The main organization that supports this action in Denmark is RealDania. With its own campaign and projects, RealDania proves to be, as they very well say it, “a change agent that supports projects in the built environment: cities, buildings and built heritage” (www.realdania.org). Underlining the previous topic of nostalgia, the organization’s mission is “to improve quality of life and benefit the common good by improving the built environment” (Ibid.).

The organization has initiated a program entitled *Den levende bygningsarv* (*The living built heritage*), which has incorporated earlier this year a campaign and ideas catalogue of using the Danish old and abandoned churches and schools. The ideas are inspired from successful projects

outside Denmark, amongst which, there can be found the famous bookstore developed through the adaptive reuse tool of an old Dominican cathedral in Maastricht, Holland, by the architectural group Merkx+Girod. Of course, other uses can be attached to the Danish abandoned churches; nonetheless, this specific example comes to reinforce the proposed topic, as a valid tool.

In connection to this matter, the expert architect says that *churches are very historic buildings, they have an identity for the city or the neighborhood, so you cannot use them for anything, it's important that there is an overall plan a master plan, in developing a strategy on how to reuse these churches (appendix 2.1.).* The campaign is looking at six churches closed down in the city of Copenhagen offering a general analysis over this *problem (appendix 2.1.)* and how can society, the public and the private space, can deal with it.

Fact: Well over 60% Danes think that it is all right to sell the churches for a new and different purpose than the church services, while a little over 40% are concerned about taking the churches out of their use (Rambøll Analyse for Jyllandsposten, June 27, 2013 in Ny brug af kirkebygninger, RealDania)



Godsbanen, Aarhus / Photo Credits: Leif Tuxen

4.3. Retail is an Option

Not only that retail is an option for the Danish cities, but as seen and mentioned earlier in the analysis part, the Danish cities have long started their retail affiliation to their identity. On top of their historical identity as a *købstad*, shopping is part of the local news every time, it drives the economy and the vitality of a city and it is the treat of tourists whenever they pass by. There are cities in Denmark that are already shopping destinations, *Copenhagen is already a shopping destination. And a lot of the old buildings are already been used for retail. I see no problem why converted buildings shouldn't contain retail. That would be much more preferable than the big shopping centers (appendix 2.2.).* But that is to be expected from the capital city of a country. What about the rest of Denmark?

Looking for a month in the local newspaper (appendix, “Holstebro – din by.dk”, one can notice that one of the permanent categories of news is “Shopping”. Three out of seven articles were concerned about *gågade*, the city’s shopping and historic street, and other three were only about the city’s title of *Danmarks flotteste handelsby (Most beautiful shopping city in Denmark)*. I was not able to understand if the city adopted the title as a part of the city branding strategy, but being chosen for the 10th time, we can conclude that it is at least one point on the list.

In an interview with an expert architect from the Holstebro Kommune, I tried to find out which are the features representing the town, and which could possibly be generalized to every Danish City. *Holstebro serves a big area first of all, that gives a lot of people in town. We have **an old city center, an old pedestrian street**, that is cozy to be in, it’s fairly narrow and curves a bit, it’s a nice place to be, and you feel that there is people around you, and also **it has a history**. And then **of course there is the stores**, but for many of the stores it’s the same chain-stores that is many other towns, so I think it’s the feeling of having a big selection of good, but also it’s a nice place to be (appendix 2.5.).* Until now, we can appreciate that the characteristics found earlier, apply here as well and can be once more confirmed: history, nostalgia and now, shopping.

I took advantage of the Holstebro’s recently awarded title of *Danmarks flotteste handelsby* and posted (with another person’s help, my access to the social media group being denied) in a group in the social media (Facebook – Det gamle Holstebro). The topic was asking for their opinion about the use of shopping within the beautiful architecture of the city and if their view upon

Holstebro as a shopping city felt natural, or if it was purely touristic (appendix 3.2.). With 13 likes and 6 comments, the feedback was very much positive. It appears the Holstebro can be a model to follow for cities, a place to be for the inhabitants and a great destination for tourists: *Havde for nogen tid siden et møde med forretningsdrivende fra andre handelsbyer, vi brugte noget af dagen på at gå en tur gennem vores smukke kunstdekorerede by. Det var faktisk med stolthed jeg kunne vise vores by frem til nogle kollegaer udefra, de var imponeret. Jeg tænkte, hvis de synes vores by er fantastisk, må den absolut også være fantastisk for os der til daglig bor i byen, og ikke kun for turister og udefrakommende (appendix 3.2.).* The comments argue on the *old facades of the buldings'* which is still the same and should continue to be modernized and updated, with taste and respect for the architecture and history. *Derfor må man gerne give sit besyv med så restaureringer og moderniseringer kan ske med nænsom hånd og det smukke bevares (appendix 3.2.).* The choice of this community carries even more value since the group itself has as a purpose, the debate and analysis of the "old Holstebro", the old town. Another beautiful part is that more Danish cities are brought into discussion as being described *shopping cities*: *"bare se til Ringkøbing", "hvis du går en tur på Strøget i København er det jo det samme du ser. Butikker nederst og gamle smukke huse derover", "man kan se til Ringkøbing. I kan også komme til Thisted. Der jo selvfølgelig også butikker for neden. Mange af disse er dog udført som bygningen ovenover" (appendix 3.2.).*

Recently, a local article announced that the owners of the old buildings of the Dagblade in Holstebro are thinking to reuse them for retail purposes. Now, this comes in conflict with another announcement that the city is planning another shopping center in the middle of the town, idea with which the inhabitants don't really agree (*Jamen endnu et center, jamen hvad vil vi i byen et center i hvert hjørne ??? Eller Danmarks flotteste handelsby som den er blevet udråbt for 5 gang.... Tror personlig ikke på et center derude eller i Enghaven er fremtiden for byen.. Men måske kommunen snart kan beslutte sig for hvad de vil.. – appendix 3.4.).* The article is just the first idea, *en ansøgning til Holstebro Kommune beder de om, at der åbnes op for, at der kan laves butikker og lokalcenter på grunden ud til Ringvejen. »Dagligvarer er en mulighed, men der kan også være andre funktioner,« siger Jørgen Vejgaard, der ejer bygningerne sammen med Eigil Bodilsen (appendix 3.3.).*

sensibility for the cultural heritage in Denmark might be a great branding success for Danish cities. Mostly for the Asian and American tourist, that haven't been as careful about their own heritage. Old buildings and cultural heritage have an different atmosphere than new buildings. An atmosphere that can be hard to describe, but that most people can feel. I definitely think that the general idea of reuse is a very present discussion and without a doubt something that we should exploit. Whether it is retail or other programs I don't think is as important. As long as we reuse the old building mass.

4.4. No Change Without a Meaning: Coherence and Suitability

Both the expert interviews and the observations in the media content and netnography, have brought to the light a characteristic that needs to be mentioned as it conditions or better describes the adaptive reuse as a tool, and a tool for branding.

4.4.1. Coherence

Given the prior analysis on nostalgia and the close connection that the Danish city has with its historical roots, I captured through the interviews and then observed in the people's interactions in social media, a very interesting fact: the city needs to stay true to its identity, even when it creates a new one. And even if it sounds contradictory, it needs to point out that change is welcomed, however, it needs to come with a "story" for the city and for the community. Take Århus for instance, *where you have this intention of expanding the city to the harbor and sea, and it becomes like individual buildings which are crying out loud, come see me, I'm so fantastic, I'm so nice. And all the buildings **have no connections** (...) it would be nicer if the buildings were closer together, and then have the open space between them (appendix 2.3.); it's **depending to get a coherent impression, the overall** (appendix 2.3.).*

The sole use of the buildings just for the sake of it does not suit the view of the Danish experts, because *it's very, very important that you use your work at the right places, because you cannot save it all, something has to go (appendix 2.3).*

In a public topic within a group on Facebook, I chose to look at the reactions gathered (FORUM, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ForumForArkitektoniskKulturarv/?pnref=lhc>) by the

members (all members are architects, 180 members, moderated by the Arkitektonisk Kulturarv) in a topic (article share, September 2014) regarding the restoration of a house in a city in Sweden. The location outside Denmark is not important, as the respondents were commenting the action in itself, confident in the online (behind the computer personal feeling), with a better option to express themselves freely (Solomon, 1996).

The topic on the article ”Strømlinet byhus midt i gammel bydel” (recommended translation, *Sleak townhouse in the middle of old town*), has been seen by 132 people (Facebook settings data) and managed to gather 17 comments (appendix 3.1.) from the architect-member profiles, to the status *For eller Imod? (For or Against?)*. The debate from the article is on a modern building and style, recently finished between a series of very old houses on a historic street, probably in the old part of the town. On a first glimpse, the difference is obvious however, I believe that the beauty of this exercise resides in the fact that both sides, pro and against, even if the predominance is **against** (around 13), they are all right. One might think that the topic is lacking relevance, but each comment is actually based on the same principle forwarded above: coherence. Amongst the *against*-comments, the coherent idea can be spotted: *Against this. Every thing fits his place... (Imod i denne. Hver ting passer sit sted...)*, accompanied by an ironic comparison, *as if a new smart high-tech lamp can match an old, patinated furniture - and even highlight the fine details of the old (som når en ny, smart hightech lampe kan matche et gammelt, patineret møbel - og ligefrem fremhæve de fine detaljer i det gamle)*. One participant described the “view” as *brutalitet (brutality – towards the city and the creative work of architects)* while another one mentioned the inappropriate vision in the **kontekst** (*context*). On the opposite side, supporting the modern house, one of the feedbacks looks even more into this process by advocating that *the times change and so do houses too. We should probably not have all the old towns laying there like dead museums (Tiderne ændre sig det gør husene også. Vi skal vel ikke have alle gamle byer liggende hen som døde museer)*.

4.4.2. Suitability

In March this year, the Kirkefonden announced that it has put out for sale five churches out of use, in Copenhagen. In the Politiken’s article “Fem københavnske kirker er sat til salg”, the Kirkefonden choses to mention for the publishing of the announcement one of the most important points that would condition the purchase and reuse of the buildings with **suitability**.

The publication writes that *the churches will be used for purposes that are compatible with the buildings and their history* (original text: *kirkerne skal bruges til formål, der er forenelige med bygningerne og deres historie*). The message sent is very clear and it is found reiterated in the interviews as well, saying that *the reuse needs to have respect for the old building and its previous use (...) you reuse a church in many ways, a hotel, a restaurant, a spa, but you could not open a club. That would be too much* (audio file 6).

A very good example should be noted in the case of suitability, where *there can be an ethical issue when for example McDonalds make a new store in an old conserved house on Kongens Nytorv. You might question whether a beautiful building like that, should be home for at mega brand that stands for all the opposite values.* (appendix 2.2.). I searched the case online and, there are three channels of information, which, can sum up the disappointment for this reuse project. Looking at the article published by Politiken (*Historiker: »Den nye McDonalds på Kgs. Nytorv er en katastrofe«*), the strongest impact and importance is the quote: *»Det her sted har en rig historie, men som det ser ud i dag, træder man ind i et historieløst lokale. Hvis man blev beamet herind, ville man kigge sig omkring og tænke, at man befandt sig hvor som helst i verden og ikke nødvendigvis i København«, siger Christian Holm Donatzky.* The suitability for this brand association with a building well rooted in the Danish architectural history was harshly criticized. The second channel is Facebook, where the people's dissatisfaction turned into a community page with 11.915 fans, entitled *Fanme Nej Til Mcdonalds På Kgs. Nytorv*. Even if the story covers the year 2012, it has not lost its contemporaneity. A third stop is the brand's YouTube channel, McDonaldsDanmark, where a timelaps recording of the building and interior changes has been posted. The users of the platform were not late for commenting, *McDonalds havde ellers udtalt de ville renovere med respekt...selv de smukke gamle lofter er væk....håber de nye grimme lokaler kommer til at stå tomme, føj føj føj!!! :-)* (McDonald's Kongens Nytorv transformation). Thus, suitability gets a front seat in the adaptive reuse projects as well as the city branding strategies. The people's reaction is proof enough to understand what to be careful and how to choose the projects in the Danish cities.

4.5. Obstacles and Solutions

The very creative tool shows a very big potential on the Danish urban branding area, however, there are a couple of obstacles that can obdurate the creative impulse. Taking the case study approached by RealDania in their proposed campaign, the sole acquisition of the built structure is very costly, as Politiken writes *Men hvis man kunne tænke sig at købe en kirke, så varierer prisen med flere millioner. Den billigste er Bavnehøj Kirke, der er til salg for 2,9 millioner kroner, mens Absalons Kirke topper med en salgspris på 9,7 millioner kroner (Fem københavnske kirker er sat til salg).*

The expert architects were able to point out that *we have this in Denmark, local plans for the community, sometimes they tell you what kind of functions that you can build in this area, and you have to convince the authorities that this could go along with the plans (appendix 2.1.).* It becomes clear that one of the limitations in the process starts from the public sphere and the regulations imposed. *Often if you use an old building you have to fulfill the new standards of isolation and if it's before 1977 you have to be very careful about the materials they used, asbestos and so on, and then it gets very expensive to re-use these buildings (appendix 2.3.).* Along with the faulty collaboration with the authorities, adaptive reuse projects can be more costly than new buildings, yet, it can worth the trouble.

The conclusion reached together with the experts is that there should be a better collaboration between the public and the private sectors, in order to achieve successful results in projects like adaptive reuse. *There can be many restrictions of the building or area if it is preserved. Other than that, I believe it is easy to start an adaptive reuse project in DK. Building developers might believe that it is cheaper to destroy the old building and build a new one. But as an architect I believe that we have a responsibility to make sure we use old building mass (appendix 2.2.).*

Another obstacle standing in the way of the peaceful development of the Danish cities, is the implementation of more and more shopping malls. By collecting all shops one can find along a shopping street, inside one single location, the Danish cities are beginning to dry out. *In Herning the center is deadly for the city shops to have this center. People want to go to where they have this compressed area where you can have everything, you can buy a lot of different things, but it should be in a quite narrow area (appendix 2.3.).*

V. CONCLUSION

The present paper has been concerned to explore the adaptive reuse of old buildings as a potential tool to brand the Danish cities onto shaping their identity as shopping destinations. The research and its findings want to play the role of a pilot research, where further investigation could reinforce and confirm the practicability of the branding strategy proposed.

Cities have always been centers of development, economically and culturally, and in Denmark they go far back in the Middle Ages, when the Danish towns started receiving the king's honorable attribute of *købstad*. Ever since, they have developed to be a machine of change, socially and politically. However, for cities to reach high levels of performance and recognition, they have to undergo a series of transformations and continue to develop.

With great examples of adaptive reuse all over Denmark, I wanted to understand if a tool like adaptive reuse, imported from the creative field of architecture could play a bigger role than to limit it to the level of sole, occasional projects, which faces the risk of creating, in time, a puzzled image over the Danish urban landscape.

Since the very beginning of the study I came to notice that the Danish cities do not have in general, a compact idea and a straightforward message as of what is their true identity. After studying more websites of the Danish commune, I have noticed that the main interest of the cities are directed towards education, culture and environment. Thinking of successful examples of adaptive reuse of old buildings like Nordkraft in Aalborg, Normann Copenhagen in Copenhagen or the innovative retail design implemented by Bang&Olufsen, also in Copenhagen, I realized that behind these renowned pieces of retail and culture from the Danish stage and their creative endeavors within the Danish cities, could lay a valuable tool for branding. The effort was therefore, to find out how could bridging the architecture with retail, towards successful city branding, take place.

Using in-depth expert interviews with Danish architects, and together with the valuable information obtained through the activities held by RealDania in Denmark, I could realize a definition of the Danish city and understand that architecture and history play a very important role in the Danish culture of the cities. Together with media content analysis and information

gathered through netnography, I managed to create an introduction to what would the premises of using adaptive reuse as a tool for branding the Danish cities are.

Even if more research is needed in the matter, I strongly believe that this can be a valuable and practical tool to construct the identity of the Danish cities which are now facing economical threats (shopping malls drying out the shopping streets, the Struer case of application to be part of Holstebro etc.). Using the city branding hexagon forwarded by Anholt (2006) and with a model of adaptive reuse somehow close to the model of conversion for marketed exploitation proposed by Schneider and Jessen (2003), the adaptive reuse should be seen as a culturally and financially friendly tool to work within the image of the Danish urban space. The research results show that branding the Danish cities as shopping cities is a valid and potent solution for the salvation of the urban landscape. However, there are a few parameters to be taken into account like history, coherency, rightness and respect towards the community of a place, through better collaborations between the public and the private space.

Finally, I strongly believe that the present topic is a practical view that could help the Danish cities develop by using nothing else but its own resources, the built environment, creativity and entrepreneurial flair.

5.1. Further research

Starting from the present paper, a series of other topics can be approached for a better insight of the pressing situation the Danish cities are. I am saying pressured and problematic even, because of the reactions discovered during the present research amongst the netnography and media content analysis. Due to economic issues, to confusing urban actions and to a low interest towards the image and brand building of the cities, Denmark is communicating merely through its capital city and the next two more known for education and culture, Aarhus, and H.C. Andersen's town, Odense.

The present theory, if successful and I believe that it can be successful, is missing the testing on the national and international audiences, Danes and tourists. Briefly tested through the netnography content analysis, the adaptive reuse as a tool for branding the Danish City still needs to pass more tests with the two audiences.

Other topics of interest which have emerged from the present research is the topic of shopping malls in the Danish cities, and found to be a threat and the cause of “death” for so many shopping streets (*in Odense, the biggest or the second biggest shopping center in Denmark costs the city’s shops, where the center is drying out from one end to another; only the area around the town hall is alive, all the other shops are closing because of this big place outside – appendix 2.3.*).

In addition to this, another idea worth mentioning is the look over *the globalization of the Danish Design*. A matter of questioning the way creativity is being “transported” worldwide and its effects (*Danish design is also expanding all over Europe, you can by this Jack and Jones all over Germany and all these brands are all over the place – appendix 2.3.*).

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